

In Secret.

Robert W. Chambers

MYSTERY, Love and War—a story of thrills drawn in vivid colors against the towering background of the snow capped Alps! In a swift rush of action, Evelyn Erith and Kay McKay of The Secret Service are carried through intrigue, plots and attacks, foiling Germany's Plan of World Conquest.

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CHAPTER I.

THE case in question concerned a letter in a yellow envelope, which was dumped along with other incoming mail upon one of the many long tables where hundreds of women and scores of men sat opening and reading thousands of letters for the Bureau of P. C.—whatever that may mean.

In due course of routine a girl picked up and slit open the yellow envelope, studied the enclosed letter for a few moments, returned it to its envelope, wrote a few words on a slip of paper, attached the slip to the yellow envelope, and passed it along to the D. A. C.—whoever he or she may be.

The D. A. C., in course of time, opened this letter for the second time, inspected it, returned it to the envelope, added a memorandum, and sent it on up to the A. C.—whatever A. C. may signify.

Seated at his desk, the A. C. perused the memorandum, glanced over the letter and then attached memoranda, added his terse comment to the other slips, pinned them to the envelope, and routed it through certain channels which ultimately carried the letter into a room where six silent and preoccupied people sat busy at six separate tables.

Fate had taken charge of that yellow envelope from the moment it was mailed in Mexico; Chance now laid it on a yellow oak table before a yellow-haired girl; Destiny squinted over her shoulder as she drew the letter from its triply violated envelope and spread it out on the table before her.

A rich, warm flush mounted to her cheeks as she examined the document. Her chance to distinguish herself had arrived at last. She divined it instantly. She did not doubt it. She was a remarkable girl.

The room remained very still. The five other expert eyes of the P. J. Service were huddled over their tables, pencil in hand, absorbed in their several ungodly complication and laborious calculations. But they possessed no Rosetta Stone to aid them in deciphering hieroglyphics; and the yellow-haired girl, with her load-like, they carried the precious stone in their heads, M. D.

The yellow-haired girl presently rose from her chair, carrying in her hand the yellow letter and its yellow envelope with yellow slips attached; and this harmonious combination of color passed noiselessly into a smaller adjoining office, where a solemn young man sat biting an unlighted cigar and gazing with preternatural acuity at nothing at all.

Possibly his pretty affianced was the object of his deep reveries—he had her photograph in his desk—perhaps official cogitation as D. C. of the E. C. D.—if you understand what I mean—may have been responsible for his owlish abstraction.

Because he did not notice the advent of the yellow-haired girl until she said in her soft, attractive voice: "May I interrupt you a moment, Mr. Vaux?"

Then he glanced up. "Surely, surely," he said. "Hum—hum!—please be seated, Miss Erith! Hum! Surely!"

She laid the sheets of the letter and the yellow envelope upon the desk before him, and seated herself on a chair at his elbow. She was very pretty. But engaged men never notice such details.

He read placidly the various memoranda written on the yellow slips of paper, scrutinized the cancelled stamps, postmarks, superscription. But when his gaze fell upon the body of the letter his complacent expression altered to one of disgust.

"What's this, Miss Erith?" "Code cipher, I'm afraid." "The damn!"

Miss Erith smiled. She was one of those girls who always look as though they had not been long out of a bathtub. She had hazel eyes, a winsome smile and hair like warm gold. Her figure was youthfully straight and supple. But that would not interest an engaged man.

The D. C. glanced at her inquiringly. "Surely, surely, he muttered, 'hum—hum!' and tried to fix his mind on the letter.

In fact, she was one of those girls who unintentionally and innocently render masculine minds uneasy through some delicate, indefinable attraction which defies analysis.

"Surely," murmured the D. C., "surely! Hum—hum!"

A subtle freshness like the breath of spring in a young orchard seemed to linger about her. She was exquisitely fashioned to trouble men, but she didn't wish to do such a—

Vaux, who was in love with another girl, took another uneasy look at her, sideways, then picked up a bit of unlighted cigar and browsed up at it.

"Yes," he said nervously, "this is one of those accursed code-ciphers. They always route them through to me. Why don't they notify the P. J.?"

"Are you going to turn this over to the Postal Inspection Service?" "Please! Mr. Vaux," she pleaded.

"What do you think about it, Miss Erith? You see it's one of those hopeless arbitrary ciphers for which there is no earthly solution except by discovering and securing the code-book and working it out that way."

She said calmly, but with heightened color: "A copy of that book is, presumably, in possession of the man to whom this letter is addressed."

"Surely—surely! Hum—hum! What's his name, Miss Erith?" glancing down at the yellow envelope. "Oh, yes—Herman Lauffer—hum!"



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He consulted other volumes containing supplementary lists of suspects and undesirable—lists furnished daily by certain services unnecessary to mention.

"Here he is!" exclaimed Vaux; "Herman Lauffer, picture-framer and glider. That's his number on Madison Avenue"—pointing to the type-written paragraph. "You see he's probably already under surveillance—one of the several services is doubtless keeping tabs on him."

The D. C. was deeply in love with somebody else, yet he found it hard to concentrate his mind for a while, and he chewed his unlighted cigar into a pulp. Alas! Men are that way. Not sometimes. Always.

Finally he shoved aside the pile of letters which he had been trying to read, unhooked the telephone receiver, and added a request that undue liberties be taken with any outgoing letters mailed and presumably composed and written by Mr. Lauffer's own fair hand.

"Much obliged, Mr. Vaux," cooed Cassidy, in a voice so suave that Vaux noticed its unusual blandness and asked if that particular service already had "anything on Lauffer?"

"Not soon but yet!" replied Mr. Cassidy, facetiously; "thanks entirely to your kind tip, Mr. Vaux."

And Vaux, suspicious of such urbane pleasantness, rang off and resumed his mutilated cigar.

"Now, what the devil does Cassidy know about Herman Lauffer," he mused, "and why the devil hasn't his bureau informed us?" After long pondering he found no answer. Besides, he kept thinking at moments about Miss Erith, which confused him and diverted his mind from the business on hand.

This evening was becoming one of the coldest ever recorded in New York. The thermometer had dropped to 8 degrees below zero and was still falling. Fifth Avenue glittered, shoaled in frost; traffic police on post stamped and swung their arms to keep from freezing; dry snow underfoot squeaked when trodden on; crossings were gray with glare ice.

It was, also, one of those monotonous, weariless, heartless nights when the privation which had hitherto amused New York suddenly became an ugly menace. There was no coal to be had and only green wood. The poor quietly died, as usual, the well-to-do ventured a hot and a stick or two in open grate or sat huddled under rug over oil or electric stove, or migrated to comfortable hotels. And bachelors took to their clubs. That is where Clifford Vaux went by taxi, buried cheek-deep in his fur collar, battling all cold, all coal companies, all all Katers.

He found himself seated at a table with a glass of something or other at his elbow, which seemed slightly and distinctly, resting one slim, white hand on his desk.

He had already touched the telephone receiver to unhook it. Miss Erith looked at him appealingly; her eyes were very, very blue.

"Couldn't we handle it?" she asked. "You and I?"

"But that's not our affair, Miss Erith!" "Make it so! Oh, please do. Won't you?"

Vaux smiled. "All right; go ahead, my dear Miss Erith. You're officially detailed for this delightful job. Do it your own way, but do it."

"Thank you so much!" "—In twenty-four hours," he added grimly. "Otherwise I'll turn it over to the P. J."

"Oh! That is brutal of you!" "Sorry. But if you can't get the code-book in twenty-four hours I'll have to call in the service than can."

The girl bit her lip and held out her hand for the letter. "I can't let it go out of my office," he remarked. "You keep that, Miss Erith."

"I merely wish to copy it," she said reproachfully. Her eyes were blue. "I ought not to let you take a copy out of this office," he muttered.

"But you will, won't you?" "All right. Use that machine over there. Hum—hum!"

"Where may I telephone you when you're not here?" she inquired diffidently, resting one slim, white hand on his desk.

"At the Racquet Club. Are you going out?"

She nodded with one of those winsome smiles which incline young men to revery. Then she turned and walked toward the cloak room.

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What Is Your Kick?

KICKS are good things. Every big reform that was ever accomplished started when some one decided to kick. Probably many people have the same kick as you and would like to know that others agree with them.

What's your Kick? We want to know about it! Other people want to know about it. Kick, get together, start something—and reform results! Write your Kick out to-day and mail it to "The Kick Editor" of The Evening World.

NEW YORK, Oct. 17. The Anti-Saloon League has succeeded in practically abolishing the saloon. The Prohibitionists declare they've abolished an evil. They've taken away the place where the poor workman can enjoy a pleasant half hour. Now that they've succeeded in doing this, have they an antidote for this evil? Have they come forward with any practical suggestions which will enable the poor workman to continue his recreational diversion? Can you picture him getting sociable or enjoying himself over a glass of soft pop? I am a home-loving man! I couldn't possibly enjoy drinking more than two glasses of beer. Where do I get off?

Oct. 18. WORKINGMAN. There is a big kick coming from passengers on the Fulton Street elevated road (Brooklyn), who, taking either a local or express train and getting off at Franklin Avenue station, are jammed into already crowded cars. But to make matters worse, no platform men are on this station, and minutes are lost because of the inability of the guards to close the gates. This is due to passengers persisting in trying to squeeze on the platform of the car which is already jammed. A platform man to each two-car entrance would keep the passengers from crowding and trains would be enabled to get away from the station much quicker. J. J. E.

TO THE "KICK" EDITOR: Well, suppose I am only one out of a million who is going to "kick" about the same thing, namely, the intolerable telephone service which New Yorkers are subjected to at the present time. It takes me five minutes to get the operator, for ten minutes I am told the line is busy, then the line is out of order. At the end of thirty or forty-five minutes I finally get my number, which at the same time happens to be a wrong one. It's a lucky thing that my office is not burning or some one is dying, or they would be dead by the time I got the correct number. What have other readers got to say about the telephone service? J. IRWIN.

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WHAT Do You Know? Copyright, 1919, by The Press Publishing Co. (The New York Evening World).

1. Who invented the airplane?
2. What are the workingman's councils in Russia called?
3. Who wrote the "Rhymes of a Red Cross Man?"

4. Who was the Norse God of War?
5. Who was the first woman elected to Congress?
6. Which is the smallest planet in the solar system?

7. What is the mottled rock which flows from a volcano called?
8. What is the vertical line which separates the measures on a staff of music called?

9. Of what substance is the tusk of a walrus composed?
10. On what continent are most diamonds mined?

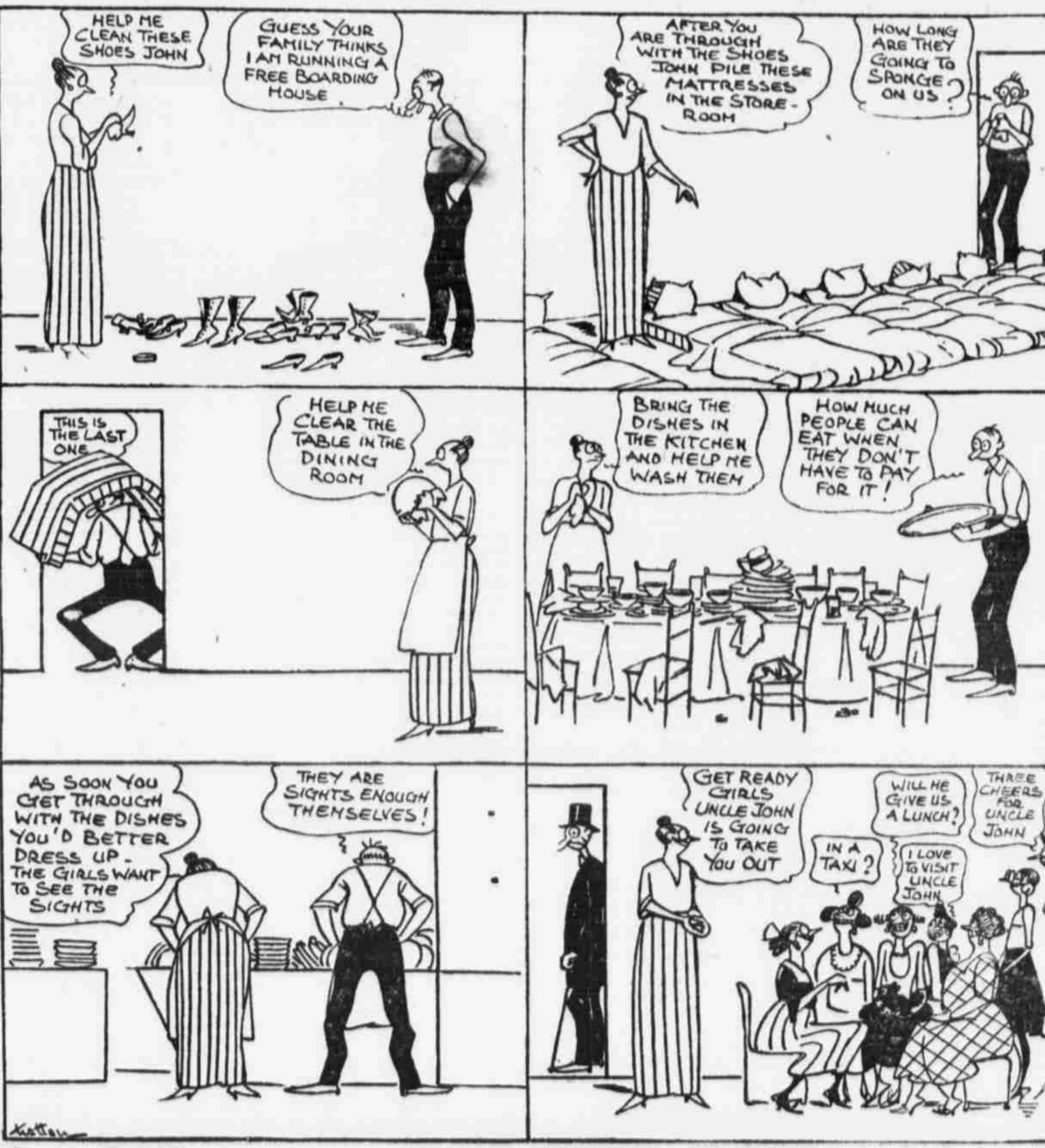
11. What is the kitchen on board a ship called?
12. For how many years is a patent granted by the United States?

ANSWERS FOR SATURDAY'S QUESTIONS.
1. Buenos Ayres; 2. Fortraits; 3. Watterson; 4. Los Miserables; 5. Dot; 6. Ohio; 7. Catalina; 8. Pitchblende; 9. 20; 10. 20; 11. 60; 12. Behring.

The Day of Rest!

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By Maurice Ketten



New and Original Fashion Designs

For Smart Women

By Mildred Lodewick

Kerami Offers an Unusual Trimming to This Robe

I WONDER how many women have any appreciation of what a real influence the robe they don in the morning has on the way the day will pass. Something fresh and dainty is to the woman who has any temperament at all, a necessary because of the psychological effect it has on her; and if she is married, with a hubby to pour the coffee, it has a psychological effect on him as just as great. One's mind is put in an inspiring atmosphere which brings out through the day the best that is in one. And, women readers, if any of you appear early in the morning in careless, unattractive attire, think for a moment that the contrast that is presented to your husband when he leaves the house, to encounter smart, well-dressed business girls with beautifully coiffed hair and an immaculate toilette.

A breakfast robe, or negligee, is not difficult to make, and as for materials any woman can surely find enough pieces of discarded evening or afternoon frocks or silken summer frocks to develop one.

I have designed a pretty model that employs two colors of Georgette crepe. The foundation would be best of pale pink or blue, while the over tunic may be of lavender, jade green, dull or shimmering blue, or rose. In fact, over the foundation which is a straight, loose-

hanging affair, girdled with a band of roses, various colored tunics may be worn, thus achieving a delightful change in effect. This tunic is unusually characteristic in its cut and general proportions, the low pointed opening, and the very deep band on the bottom being distinguishing features. It is slipped on over the head with straps of kerami, a fabric which imitates fur, but comes in pale colors as well as the usual mole and chinchilla shades, and when seen in a mass on the lower portion of the garment lends a fascinating richness that is unusual. This band, however, could be supplanted with satin, velvet or hand embroidery done on the Georgette.

The sleeves are long-dropping, kimono ones, brought together at the wrist with a cluster of roses.

Announcement THE Character Analysts Editor asks The Evening World readers to have patience. Hundreds of letters have flooded this office from among young ladies who have taken advantage of this paper's offer to reveal the positive tendencies of their sweethearts, as indicated by their handwriting. Those who have asked four specific questions, including a generous specimen of "his" handwriting, may expect to see their questions answered at an early date in this paper.

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